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Report of the Disarmament Commission

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Note

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I. Introduction

1. At its fifty-third session, the General Assembly adopted resolution 53/79 A of 4 December 1998, entitled "Report of the Disarmament Commission", which reads as follows:

"*The General Assembly*,

"*Having considered* the report of the Disarmament Commission,[1]

"*Recalling* its resolutions 47/54 A of 9 December 1992, 47/54 G of 8 April 1993, 48/77 A of 16 December 1993, 49/77 A of 15 December 1994, 50/72 D of 12 December 1995, 51/47 B of 10 December 1996 and 52/40 B of 9 December 1997,

"*Considering* the role that the Disarmament Commission has been called upon to play and the contribution that it should make in examining and submitting recommendations on various problems in the field of disarmament and in the promotion of the implementation of the relevant decisions adopted by the General Assembly at its tenth special session,

"1. *Takes note* of the report of the Disarmament Commission;[1]

"2. *Reaffirms* the importance of further enhancing the dialogue and cooperation among the First Committee, the Disarmament Commission and the Conference on Disarmament;

"3. *Also reaffirms* the role of the Disarmament Commission as the specialized, deliberative body within the United Nations multilateral disarmament machinery that allows for in-depth deliberations on specific disarmament issues, leading to the submission of concrete recommendations on those issues;

"4. *Commends* the Disarmament Commission for the successful conclusion of the review of its work in accordance with General Assembly resolution 52/12 B of 19 December 1997 at the resumed session of the First Committee in June 1998, resulting in the adoption of Assembly decision 52/492 of 8 September 1998;

"5. *Encourages* the Disarmament Commission to continue to make every effort to enhance its working methods so as to enable it to give focused consideration to a limited number of priority issues in the field of disarmament, bearing in mind the decision it has taken to move its agenda towards a two-item phased approach;

"6. *Requests* the Disarmament Commission to continue its work in accordance with its mandate, as set forth in paragraph 118 of the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session of the General Assembly,[2] and with paragraph 3 of Assembly resolution 37/78 H of 9 December 1982, and to that end to make every effort to achieve specific recommendations on the items of its agenda, taking into account the adopted 'Ways and means to enhance the functioning of the Disarmament Commission';[3]

"7. *Notes* that the Disarmament Commission, at its 1998 organizational session, adopted the following items for consideration at its 1999 substantive session:

"(a) The establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at among the States of the region concerned;

"(b) Guidelines on conventional arms control/limitation and disarmament, with particular emphasis on consolidation of peace in the context of General Assembly resolution 51/45 N of 10 December 1996;

"(c) The fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament;

"8. *Requests* the Disarmament Commission to meet for a period not exceeding three weeks during 1999 and to submit a substantive report to the General Assembly at its fifty-fourth session;

"9. *Requests* the Secretary-General to transmit to the Disarmament Commission the annual report of the Conference on Disarmament,[4] together with all the official records of the fifty-third session of the General Assembly relating to disarmament matters, and to render all assistance that the Commission may require for implementing the present resolution;

"10. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to ensure full provision to the Disarmament Commission and its subsidiary bodies of interpretation and translation facilities in the official languages and to assign, as a matter or priority, all the necessary resources and services, including verbatim records, to that end;

"11. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-fourth session the item entitled 'Report of the Disarmament Commission'."

2. The Disarmament Commission met at United Nations Headquarters and held two meetings, on 2 December 1998 and 19 March 1999 (see A/CN.10/PV.225), for its organizational session. During that session, the Commission

considered questions related to the organization of work for its 1999 substantive session in accordance with the adopted "Ways and means to enhance the functioning of the Disarmament Commission" (A/CN.10/137) and in the light of General Assembly resolution 53/79 A. The Commission took up the question of the election of its officers, taking into account the principle of rotation of the chairmanship among the geographical regions. The Commission considered the provisional agenda for the 1999 substantive session and decided to establish a committee of the whole and three working groups to deal with the three substantive items on the agenda. The Commission further decided that its next substantive session would be held from 12 to 30 April 1999.

II. Organization and work of the 1999 substantive session

3. The Disarmament Commission met at United Nations Headquarters from 12 to 30 April 1999. In the course of its session, the Commission held six plenary meetings (see A/CN.10/PV.226–231) under the chairmanship of Maged A. Abdelaziz (Egypt). Timur Alasaniya, Political Affairs Officer of the Disarmament and Decolonization Organs Servicing Branch, Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services, served as Acting Secretary of the Commission.

4. During the 1999 session, the Bureau of the Commission was constituted as follows:

Chairman:
Mr. Maged A. Abdelaziz (Egypt)

Vice-Chairmen:
Representatives of the following States: Croatia, Italy, Mali, Mexico, Mongolia, Philippines, Portugal and Slovakia

Rapporteur:
Ms. Gaile Ann Ramoutar (Trinidad and Tobago)

5. At its 226th plenary meeting, on 12 April 1999, the Commission adopted its provisional agenda, contained in document A/CN.10/L.44, as follows:

1. Opening of the session.
2. Adoption of the agenda.
3. Organization of work.
4. The establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at among the States of the region concerned.
5. The fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament.
6. Guidelines on conventional arms control/limitation and disarmament, with particular emphasis on consolidation of peace in the context of General Assembly resolution 51/45 N.
7. Report of the Disarmament Commission to the General Assembly at its fifty-fourth session.
8. Other business.

6. At the same meeting, the Commission approved its general programme of work for the session (A/CN.10/1999/CRP.1) and decided to allocate four meetings to a general exchange of views.

7. On 12 and 13 April, the Disarmament Commission held a general exchange of views on all agenda items (see A/CN.10/PV.226–229). The representatives of the following countries made statements during the general exchange of views: Algeria, Argentina, Bangladesh, Belarus, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Egypt, Germany (on behalf of the European Union and associated States), India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mali, Mexico (on behalf of the Rio Group), Mongolia, Myanmar, Pakistan, Peru, Poland (on behalf of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia), Philippines, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, South Africa, Syrian Arab Republic, Turkey, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Venezuela and Viet Nam.

8. Pursuant to the request of the General Assembly in resolutions 51/219 and 53/207, the Department for Disarmament Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat presented for review by the Commission the draft medium-term plan for the period 2002–2005, as contained in document A/CN.10/1999/CRP.2. The Committee of the Whole devoted two meetings to that review.

9. On 23 April, the Committee of the Whole heard a statement by the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, Jayantha Dhanapala, on the proposed medium-term plan on disarmament. The Under-Secretary-General explained that the draft plan was based on existing mandates given to the United Nations. The draft plan would be revised taking into account the comments made by the members of the Commission, submitted to the Committee for Programme and Coordination in June 2000 and subsequently reviewed by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, as well as the First and the Fifth

Committees, during the fifty-fifth regular session of the General Assembly.

10. On 23 and 29 April, delegations made general comments on the draft medium-term plan for the disarmament programme on the understanding that the comments did not represent any final views or formal endorsement of the draft plan.

11. On behalf of the Department for Disarmament Affairs, the Under-Secretary-General took note of the comments and undertook to take them into consideration in revising the draft medium-term plan.

12. In accordance with the decisions taken at its organizational session, the Disarmament Commission entrusted Working Group I with the mandate of dealing with agenda item 4, entitled "The establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at among the States of the region concerned". Working Group I met under the chairmanship of Emilio Izquierdo (Ecuador) and held 17 meetings between 14 and 29 April.

13. The Commission entrusted Working Group II with the mandate of dealing with agenda item 5, entitled "The fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament". Working Group II met under the chairmanship of Arizal Effendi (Indonesia) and held 6 meetings between 14 and 29 April.

14. The Commission entrusted Working Group III with the mandate of dealing with agenda item 6, entitled "Guidelines on conventional arms control/limitation and disarmament, with particular emphasis on consolidation of peace in the context of General Assembly resolution 51/45 N". Working Group III met under the chairmanship of Michael Hoey (Ireland) and held 13 meetings between 14 and 28 April.

15. At its 231st plenary meeting, on 30 April, the Disarmament Commission considered the reports of Working Groups I, II and III on agenda items 4, 5 and 6 respectively. The reports of the subsidiary bodies of the Commission and the conclusions and recommendations contained therein are included in section IV of the present report.

16. In accordance with the past practice of the Disarmament Commission, some non-governmental organizations attended the plenary meetings.

III. Documentation

A. Documents submitted by the Secretary-General

17. Pursuant to paragraph 9 of General Assembly resolution 53/79 A, the Secretary-General, by a note dated 8 February 1999, transmitted to the Disarmament Commission the annual report of the Conference on Disarmament,[4] together with all the official records of the fifty-third session of the General Assembly relating to disarmament ...atters (A/CN.10/198).

B. Other documents, including documents submitted by Member States

18. In the course of the Commission's work, the documents listed below, dealing with substantive questions, were submitted.

19. Five working papers, each entitled "Establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at among the States of the region concerned", were submitted by the Chairman of Working Group I (A/CN.10/1999/WG.I/WP.1 and Rev.1, 2, 3 and 4).

20. Three working papers, each entitled "Guidelines on conventional arms control/limitation and disarmament, with particular emphasis on consolidation of peace in the context of General Assembly resolution 51/45 N", were submitted by the Chairman of Working Group III (A/CN.10/1999/WG.III/WP.1 and Rev.1, 2 and 3).

IV. Conclusions and recommendations

21. At its 231st plenary meeting, on 30 April, the Disarmament Commission adopted by consensus the reports of its subsidiary bodies and the conclusions and recommendations contained therein regarding agenda items 4, 5 and 6. The Commission agreed to submit the texts of those reports, reproduced below, to the General Assembly.

22. At the same meeting, the Commission adopted, as a whole, its report to the General Assembly at its fifty-fourth session, as orally amended.

23. The text of the report of Working Group I follows.

Report of Working Group I on agenda item 4

1. The Disarmament Commission, at its organizational session on 2 December 1998 and at the resumed session on 19 March 1999, decided to establish Working Group I on agenda item 4, entitled "The establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at among the States of the region concerned", pursuant to General Assembly resolution 52/40 B of 9 December 1997.

2. In connection with its work, Working Group I had before it the following documents:

(a) Working paper submitted by the Chairman of the Working Group on 23 April 1997;

(b) Working paper submitted by Mongolia (A/CN.10/195);

(c) Working paper submitted by Canada (A/CN.10/1997/WG.I/WP.1);

(d) Working paper submitted by Japan (A/CN.10/1997/WG.I/WP.2);

(e) Working paper submitted by Argentina, Brazil, Chile, New Zealand, South Africa and Uruguay (A/CN.10/1997/WG.I/WP.3);

(f) Working paper submitted by South Africa (A/CN.10/1997/WG.I/WP.4);

(g) Working paper submitted by the United States of America (A/CN.10/1997/WG.I/WP.5);

(h) Working paper submitted by the Netherlands on behalf of the European Union (A/CN.10/1997/WG.I/WP.6);

(i) Working paper submitted by Algeria, Bahrain, Comoros, Djibouti, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, the Sudan, Tunisia, the United Arab Emirates and Yemen (A/CN.10/1997/WG.I/WP.7);

(j) Working paper submitted by Israel (A/CN.10/1997/WG.I/WP.8);

(k) Working paper submitted by Belarus (A/CN.10/1997/WG.I/WP.9);

(l) Working paper submitted by the Syrian Arab Republic and Lebanon (A/CN.10/1997/WG.I/WP.10);

(m) Working paper submitted by China (A/CN.10/1997/WG.I/WP.11);

(n) Working paper submitted by Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan (A/CN.10/1997/WG.I/WP.12);

(o) Working papers submitted by the Chairman of Working Group I (A/CN.10/1998/WG.I/WP.1 and A/CN.10/1998/WG.I/WP.1/Rev.1);

(p) Working paper submitted by India (A/CN.10/1998/WG.I/WP.2);

(q) Working paper submitted by Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan (A/CN.10/1998/WG.I/WP.3);

(r) Working paper submitted by Belarus (A/CN.10/1998/WG.I/WP.4);

(s) Working papers submitted by the Chairman of Working Group I (A/CN.10/1999/WG.I/WP.1 and Rev.1, 2, 3 and 4).

3. The Working Group met under the Chairmanship of Emilio Izquierdo (Ecuador), and held 17 meetings between 14 and 30 April 1999. The Chairman also conducted a number of informal consultations. Timur Alasaniya of the Disarmament and Decolonization Organs Servicing Branch, Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services, served as Secretary of the Working Group, and Randy J. Rydell of the Department for Disarmament Affairs served as an adviser to the Working Group.

4. At the 1st meeting of the Working Group, the Chairman submitted his working paper (A/CN.10/1999/WG.I/WP.1), which took into consideration last year's working papers and other submissions and which was taken by the Group as a basis for structured discussions.

5. The Working Group, at the suggestion of the Chairman, devoted four meetings to general discussions and four meetings to comments on the Chairman's paper as a whole.

6. In the course of the following four meetings of the Working Group, focused discussions took place on specific elements contained in the Chairman's working paper and on a number of written and oral proposals made by delegations. At the request of the Working Group, the Chairman prepared a compilation of these proposals for further consideration by the delegations.

7. Based on an analysis of those discussions and considerations, the Chairman submitted four revisions of his working paper.

8. At its 17th meeting, on 30 April, the Working Group considered and adopted by consensus its report on agenda item 4 and a text entitled "Establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at among the States of the region concerned", which is annexed to the present report (see annex I).

24. The text of the report of Working Group II follows.

Report of Working Group II on agenda item 5

1. At its organizational meeting, on 2 December 1998, the Disarmament Commission decided to establish Working Group II to continue to deal with agenda item 5, entitled "Fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament", pursuant to General Assembly resolution 53/77 AA of 4 December 1998.

2. In connection with its work, the Working Group had before it the following documents:

(a) Working paper submitted by the United States of America (A/CN.10/1996/WG.II/WP.1);

(b) Working paper submitted by Italy on behalf of the European Union (A/CN.10/1996/WG.II/WP.2);

(c) Working paper submitted by Indonesia on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and other States (A/CN.10/1996/WG.II/WP.3);

(d) Working paper submitted by Italy on behalf of the European Union (A/CN.10/1996/WG.II/WP.4);

(e) Working paper submitted by New Zealand (A/CN.10/1996/WG.II/WP.5);

(f) Working paper submitted by the Chairman (A/CN.10/1996/WG.II/WP.6);

(g) Working paper submitted by Indonesia on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and other States (A/CN.10/1997/WG.II/WP.1);

(h) Working paper submitted by the United States of America (A/CN.10/1997/WG.II/WP.2);

(i) Working paper submitted by Canada (A/CN.10/1997/WG.II/WP.3);

(j) Working paper submitted by China (A/CN.10/1997/WG.II/WP.4);

(k) Working paper submitted by the Netherlands on behalf of the European Union (A/CN.10/1997/WG.II/WP.5).

3. The Working Group met under the chairmanship of Arizal Effendi (Indonesia) and held six meetings between 14 and 29 April 1999. Lin Kuo-chung, Chief of the Disarmament and Decolonization Organs Servicing Branch of the Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services, served as senior adviser to and Secretary of the Working Group, and Michael Cassandra of the Department for Disarmament Affairs served as adviser to the Working Group. The Chairman of the Working Group also conducted informal consultations during the session.

4. At the 1st meeting, on 14 April, the Chairman of the Working Group made a substantive introductory statement. The Working Group held a general exchange of views on the item and decided that the paper presented by the Chairman of Working Group II of the 1998 substantive session of the Disarmament Commission, which had been annexed to the report of the Commission to the General Assembly at its fifty-third session,[1] should serve as a basis for consideration of the subject at the 1999 session of the Commission.

5. During the period from 15 to 29 April, the Working Group engaged in substantive consultations on the paper submitted by the Chairman of Working Group II of the 1998 substantive session of the Disarmament Commission, as contained in annex III to the report of the Commission to the General Assembly at its fifty-third session,[1] which is annexed to the present report (see annex II).

6. On 26 and 28 April, on the basis of the extensive discussion and consultations and taking into account various proposals made by delegations, the Chairman submitted two compromise proposals for consideration. The Working Group commended the Chairmen for the work they had undertaken during the 1997, 1998 and 1999 sessions of the Disarmament Commission to achieve a consensus.

7. At its 6th meeting, on 29 April, the Working Group was not able to reach a consensus on the objectives and agenda for the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

8. At the same meeting, the Working Group adopted by consensus its report on the agenda item entitled "Fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament".

25. The text of the report of Working Group III follows.

Report of Working Group III on agenda item 6

1. At its organizational session on 2 December 1998 and its resumed session on 19 March 1999, the Disarmament Commission decided to allocate agenda item 6, "Guidelines on conventional arms control/limitation and disarmament, with particular emphasis on consolidation of peace in the context of General Assembly resolution 51/45 N", to Working Group III.

2. The Working Group met under the chairmanship of Michael Hoey (Ireland), and held 13 meetings between 14 and 28 April 1999. The Chairman also conducted a number of informal consultations. Sergei Cherniavsky of the Disarmament and Decolonization Organs Servicing Branch, Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services, served as Secretary of the Working Group. Nazir Kamal of the Department of Disarmament Affairs served as adviser to the Working Group.

3. At the 1st meeting, on 14 April, the Chairman made an introductory statement and submitted to the Working Group the Chairman's working paper (A/CN.10/1999/WG.III/WP.1).

4. At the same meeting, the Working Group decided to take up the Chairman's paper as a basis for discussion on the subject. In the light of the deliberations of the Working Group, the Chairman presented three revisions of his paper.

5. At its 13th meeting, on 28 April, the Working Group adopted by consensus its report on agenda item 6 and a text entitled "Guidelines on conventional arms control/limitation and disarmament, with particular emphasis on consolidation of peace in the context of General Assembly resolution 51/45 N", which is contained in the annex to the present report (see annex III).

Notes

[1] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-third Session, Supplement No. 42* (A/53/42).

[2] Resolution S-10/12.

[3] A/CN.10/137.

[4] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-third Session, Supplement No. 27* (A/53/27).

Annex I

Establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at among the States of the region concerned

A. General overview

1. Recent developments in international relations, especially in the fields of disarmament and non-proliferation, have led to increased efforts to consolidate existing and to establish new nuclear-weapon-free zones on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at among the States of the region concerned and to a better understanding of the importance of such zones.

2. The Final Document of the Tenth Special Session of the General Assembly[a] stated that the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones on the basis of agreements or arrangements freely arrived at among the States of the zone concerned and the full compliance with those agreements or arrangements, thus ensuring that the zones are genuinely free from nuclear weapons, and respect for such zones by nuclear-weapon States constitute an important disarmament measure.

3. In 1993, the Disarmament Commission unanimously adopted "Guidelines and recommendations for the regional approaches to disarmament within the context of global security", which included a substantive consideration of zones free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction.

4. The General Assembly has over the years adopted numerous resolutions on the issue of the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in different regions of the world, which reflects the continuing interest of the international community in the establishment of such zones.

5. Nuclear-weapon-free zones have ceased to be exceptional in the global strategic environment. To date, 107 States have signed or become parties to treaties establishing existing nuclear-weapon-free zones.[b] With the addition of Antarctica, which was demilitarized pursuant to the Antarctic Treaty, nuclear-weapon-free zones now cover more than 50 per cent of the Earth's land mass.

B. Objectives and purposes

6. As has been universally recognized, nuclear-weapon-free zones have made and continue to make, as their objective, an important contribution to the strengthening of the international nuclear non-proliferation regime, to the achievement of nuclear disarmament and to global efforts aimed at achieving the ultimate objective of eliminating nuclear weapons and, more broadly speaking, general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control.

7. Each nuclear-weapon-free zone is the product of the specific circumstances of the region concerned and highlights the diversity of situations in the different regions. Moreover, the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones is a dynamic process. The experience of existing nuclear-weapon-free zones clearly shows that these are not static structures and also, in spite of the diversity of situation in different regions, highlights the feasibility of the establishment of the new nuclear-weapon-free zones on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at among the States of the region concerned.

8. Nuclear-weapon-free zones help to strengthen the security of the States that belong to such zones.

9. Nuclear-weapon-free zones are an important disarmament tool which contributes to the primary objective of strengthening regional peace and security and, by extension, international peace and security. They are also considered to be important regional confidence-building measures.

10. Nuclear-weapon-free zones can also be a means of expressing and promoting common values in the areas of nuclear disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation.

11. For the States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons,[c] nuclear-weapon-free zones are an important complementary instrument to the Treaty, article VII of which explicitly recognizes the right of any group of States to conclude regional treaties in order to assure the total absence of nuclear weapons in their respective territories. The decision on "Principles and objectives for nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament" in the Final Document of the 1995 Review and Extension Conferences of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons,[d] adopted in 1995, reaffirmed the conviction of the States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons that the establishment of internationally recognized nuclear-weapon-free zones, on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at

among the States of the region concerned, enhances global and regional peace and security.

12. Nuclear-weapon-free zones considerably strengthen and increase the nuclear non-proliferation obligations of non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons to refrain from acquiring nuclear weapons and to develop and use nuclear energy solely for peaceful purposes and in accordance with the safeguards established by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

13. Nuclear-weapon-free zones are a useful complement to the international regime for the prohibition of any nuclear-weapon-test explosions or any other nuclear explosion.

14. By signing and ratifying the relevant protocols to the treaties establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones, nuclear-weapon States undertake legally binding commitments to respect the status of such zones and not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against States parties to such treaties.

15. The current nuclear-weapon-free zones have served and are serving as an example for the establishment of new zones. At the same time, they offer support and the benefit of their experience to States that are considering proposals or proceeding to establish nuclear-weapon-free zones in other regions.

16. Nuclear-weapon-free zones may serve, as long as the respective treaty provides therefor, as a framework for international cooperation on the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes in the region, which will promote economic, scientific and technological development of the States parties.

17. Nuclear-weapon-free zones may also serve to promote cooperation aimed at ensuring that the regions concerned remain free of environmental pollution from radioactive wastes and other radioactive substances and, as appropriate, enforcing internationally agreed standards regulating international transportation of those substances.

C. Principles and guidelines

18. The principles and guidelines presented below can be regarded only as a non-exhaustive list of generally accepted observations in the current stage of the development of nuclear-weapon-free zones and are based on current practices and available experiences, bearing in mind that the process of establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones should allow for the harmonious implementation of each of these principles and guidelines.

19. The establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones is consistent with a variety of objectives. The important contribution of nuclear-weapon-free zones to the strengthening of the international non-proliferation regime and to regional and world peace and security has been universally recognized.

20. Nuclear-weapon-free zones should be established on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at among the States of the region concerned.

21. The initiative to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone should emanate exclusively from States within the region concerned and be pursued by all the States of that region.

22. In cases where consensus exists on the goal to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in a given region, efforts exerted by the States of the region concerned aimed at the establishment of such a zone should be encouraged and supported by the international community. Assistance should be provided, as appropriate, including through the essential role of the United Nations, to the States of the region concerned in their efforts to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone.

23. All the States of the region concerned should participate in the negotiations on and the establishment of such a zone on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at among the States of the region concerned.

24. The status of a nuclear-weapon-free zone should be respected by all States parties to the treaty establishing the zone as well as by States outside the region, including all States whose cooperation and support are essential for the maximum effectiveness of such a zone, namely, the nuclear-weapon States and, if there are any, States with territory or that are internationally responsible for territories situated within the zone concerned.

25. The nuclear-weapon States should be consulted during the negotiations of each treaty and its relevant protocol(s) establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone in order to facilitate their signature to and ratification of the relevant protocol(s) to the treaty, through which they undertake legally binding commitments to the status of the zone and not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against States parties to the treaty.

26. If there are any States with territory or that are internationally responsible for territories within the zone concerned, these States should be consulted during the negotiations of each treaty and its relevant protocols establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone with a view to facilitating their signature and ratification of the relevant protocol(s) to the treaty.

27. The process of establishing the zone should take into account all the relevant characteristics of the region concerned.

28. The establishment of further nuclear-weapon-free zones reaffirms the commitment of the States that belong to such zones to honour their legal obligations deriving from other international instruments in force in the area of nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament to which they are parties.

29. The obligations of all the States parties to a treaty establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone should be clearly defined and be legally binding, and the States parties should fully abide by such agreements.

30. The arrangements relating to a nuclear-weapon-free zone should be in conformity with the principles and rules of international law, including the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.[e]

31. States parties to a nuclear-weapon-free zone exercising their sovereign rights and without prejudice to the purposes and objectives of such a zone remain free to decide for themselves whether to allow visits by foreign ships and aircraft to their ports and airfields, transit of their airspace by foreign aircraft and navigation by foreign ships in or over their territorial sea, archipelagic waters or straits that are used for international navigation, while fully honouring the rights of innocent passage, archipelagic sea lane passage or transit passage in straits that are used for international navigation.

32. A treaty establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone based on arrangements freely arrived at among the States of the region concerned, and fully taking into account any other obligations that such States may have under existing regional and international arrangements, if applicable, should be implemented by the States parties concerned in accordance with their individual constitutional requirements and should be consistent with international law and the rights and obligations recognized in the Charter of the United Nations. States parties to the current nuclear-weapon-free zones should ensure that their adherence to other international and regional agreements does not entail any obligations contrary to their obligations under the nuclear-weapon-free zone treaties.

33. A nuclear-weapon-free zone should provide for the effective prohibition of the development, manufacturing, control, possession, testing, stationing or transporting by the States parties to the treaty of any type of nuclear explosive device for any purpose, and should stipulate that States parties to the treaty do not permit the stationing of any nuclear explosive devices by any other State within the zone.

34. A nuclear-weapon-free zone should provide for the effective verification of compliance with the commitments made by the parties to the treaty, *inter alia*, through the application of full-scope IAEA safeguards to all nuclear activities in the zone.[f]

35. A nuclear-weapon-free zone should constitute a geographical entity whose boundaries are to be clearly defined by prospective States parties to the nuclear-weapon-free zone treaty through full consultations with other States concerned, especially in cases where territories in dispute are involved, with a view to facilitating agreement of those States concerned.

36. Nuclear-weapon States should, for their part, assume in full their obligations vis-à-vis nuclear-weapon-free zones upon signing and ratifying relevant protocols, including strict compliance with the statute of the nuclear-weapon-free zone and, through the signing of relevant protocols, enter into binding legal commitments not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against the States that belong to the nuclear-weapon-free zone.

37. A nuclear-weapon-free zone should not prevent the use of nuclear science and technology for peaceful purposes and could also promote, if provided for in the treaties establishing such zones, bilateral, regional and international cooperation for the peaceful use of nuclear energy in the zone, in support of socio-economic, scientific and technological development of the States parties.

D. The way ahead

38. The number of initiatives taken to establish new nuclear-weapon-free zones is clear evidence of the importance of such zones to current international efforts to promote disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation.

39. All existing nuclear-weapon-free zones should come into force as soon as possible. States that are still in the process of considering their signature and/or ratification of the treaties and relevant protocols establishing the existing nuclear-weapon-free zones are encouraged to proceed therewith. In this context, cooperation and efforts by all States concerned are essential.

40. The establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in regions for which consensus resolutions of the General Assembly exist, such as the Middle East and Central Asia, as well as the development of zones free from all weapons of mass destruction, should be encouraged.[g]

41. Vigorous efforts should be made to secure cooperation and coordination among the States parties and signatories

to nuclear-weapon-free zone treaties in order to promote their common objectives. Members of nuclear-weapon-free zones could also work together to share experiences with States of other regions and support their efforts to establish further nuclear-weapon-free zones.

42. Any State from a region concerned has the right to propose the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in its region.

43. Any proposal on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at should only be considered after consensus on the objective has been achieved in broad consultations within the region concerned.

44. Without prejudice to the provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, including the principle of the freedom of the high seas, and to other applicable treaties, political relations and cooperation among the States parties and signatories to nuclear-weapon-free zone treaties can be expanded and consolidated in the context of the ultimate goal of elimination of all nuclear weapons, particularly in the Southern Hemisphere and adjacent areas.

45. The international community should continue to promote the creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones around the globe in an effort towards achieving the ultimate goal of freeing the entire world from all nuclear weapons as well as other weapons of mass destruction, and, more broadly speaking, of general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control, so that future generations can live in a more stable and peaceful atmosphere.

Notes

[a] General Assembly resolution S-10/2.

[b] These treaties may be described as follows:

(i) Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (Treaty of Tlatelolco) was opened for signature on 14 February 1967, thereby establishing for the first time in history a nuclear-weapon-free zone; the Treaty has served as a model for the promotion of other similar zones (United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 634, No. 9068);

(ii) The South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty (Treaty of Rarotonga) was opened for signature by the States of the South Pacific Forum on 6 August 1985 (see *The United Nations Disarmament Yearbook*, vol. 10: 1985 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.86.IX.7), appendix VII);

(iii) The Treaty on the South-East Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone (Treaty of Bangkok) was opened for signature on 15 December 1995 as part of the establishment of a zone of peace, freedom and neutrality in South-East Asia;

(iv) The African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty (Treaty of Pelindaba) was opened for signature on 11 April 1996 (A/50/426, annex).

[c] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 729, No. 10485.

[d] *1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, Final Document, Part I* (NPT/CONF.1995/32 (Part I), annex, decision 2).

[e] *Official Records of the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea*, vol. XVII (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.84.V.3), document A/CONF.62/122.

[f] Based on IAEA document INFCIRC/153, as strengthened by document INFCIRC/540.

[g] Owing to its unique geographical circumstances, Mongolia has declared its nuclear-weapon-free status in order to promote its security. This status was welcomed by the General Assembly in its consensus resolution 53/77 D of 4 December 1998.

Annex II

Fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament

Paper presented by the Chairman

Recalling the decision of the General Assembly at its fifty-second session, in its resolution 52/38 F of 9 December 1997, adopted without a vote, to convene, subject to the emergence of a consensus on its objectives and agenda, the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament and, subject to the outcome of the deliberations at the 1998 substantive session of the Disarmament Commission, to set an exact date for and to decide on organizational matters relating to the convening of the special session,

Recognizing that the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament should review the developments in the field of disarmament and international security that have taken place since the first special session on disarmament, bearing in mind the Final Document of that session and stressing the principles and priorities set out therein as a guide for the work of the United Nations and its Member States in the field of disarmament and international security,

Emphasizing, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, that the United Nations has a central role and primary responsibility in the field of disarmament, and that this role, as well as the disarmament machinery established by the General Assembly at its tenth special session, should be further strengthened,

Welcoming, as a step in that direction, the re-establishment of the Department for Disarmament Affairs, as referred to in General Assembly resolution 52/220 of 22 December 1997,

Seeking to provide, at the fourth special session devoted to disarmament, for a comprehensive, thorough discussion and review, as well as an assessment of all issues in the field of disarmament and international security, including those of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, conventional weapons, non-proliferation in all its aspects and disarmament machinery,

The 1998 substantive session of the Disarmament Commission *has identified the following*:

(a) The objectives of the fourth special session should include, *inter alia*:

(i) Seizing the opportunities of the present, preserving and building upon the achievements of the past in the field of disarmament and setting the future course of action in order to strengthen international peace and security;

(ii) Conducting an assessment of the implementation of the programme of action of the Final Document of the first special session devoted to disarmament, reviewing and assessing the international situation in the context of fundamental changes after the cold war and identifying new challenges and ways and means to address them;

(iii) Setting principles, guidelines and priorities for future disarmament efforts;

(iv) Establishing an agreed programme of action aimed at the future in the field of disarmament that would primarily strengthen the central role of the United Nations and promote multilateralism in the field of disarmament;

(b) The agenda of the fourth special session should include, *inter alia*:

Implementation of the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session of the General Assembly, the first special session devoted to disarmament;

The international situation since the first special session, the post-cold-war era and trends at global, regional and subregional levels;

Nuclear disarmament;

Non-proliferation in all its aspects;

Other weapons of mass destruction;

Conventional weapons issues;

Regional disarmament;

Confidence- and security-building measures and transparency;

Questions pertaining to the universality of existing agreements;

Verification and compliance issues;

The relationship between disarmament and development;

Prevention of an arms race in outer space;

General and complete disarmament;

Disarmament concepts and terminology;

Disarmament machinery;

An agreed programme of action.

Annex III

Guidelines on conventional arms control/limitation and disarmament, with particular emphasis on consolidation of peace in the context of General Assembly resolution 51/45 N

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I. Introduction

1. The conflicts of today highlight, on the one hand, the need in post-conflict situations for a comprehensive approach integrating certain practical disarmament measures, particularly with regard to small arms and light weapons, and, on the other hand, the need for further initiatives in the area of conventional arms control/limitation. The excessive accumulation of small arms and light weapons, the absence of control to arrest it and the illicit arms trade continue to have a negative effect on the internal security and socio-economic development of affected States.

2. This excessive and destabilizing accumulation not only threatens national, regional and international security, prolongs conflicts and hampers conflict resolution, and erodes negotiated peace settlements, but can be linked to intra- and inter-State crime, terrorism, violence and lawlessness. The consequences for economic and social development and for the humanitarian situation in the countries and regions concerned are often devastating.

3. The excessive accumulation of small arms and light weapons can best be averted by a combination of reduction and prevention measures:

(i) The purpose of reduction measures is the speedy removal of quantities of surplus weapons through their collection and/or destruction;

(ii) In the case of prevention measures, the objective should be to scale down over time the numbers of small arms and light weapons to a level that corresponds to a country's legitimate self-defence and security interests, to be defined by itself.

4. In the case of both sets of measures, the international community is encouraged to provide assistance in support of national and regional actions and to foster coordination between such actions. A key objective in the consolidation of peace is to allow the administrative capacity and infrastructure that were damaged during the conflict to be rebuilt in a process of conversion from war to peace.

5. Other conventional arms control/limitation and disarmament measures are also required to address the problem, such as arms control, confidence-building and transparency measures, and the combating of the illicit arms trade in small arms and light weapons. Practical disarmament measures have a special relevance to a conflict which is approaching solution; to a recently ended conflict; and as a consequence, to preventing a conflict from re-emerging. Such measures could include arms control, collection, storage and/or destruction, demining, demobilization and integration.

6. The report of the Secretary-General on the consolidation of peace through practical disarmament measures (A/52/289), submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 51/45 N, contains a set of recommendations addressed to Member States in which measures are proposed to reduce and prevent excessive accumulation and proliferation of small arms. The report of the Secretary-General on small arms (A/52/298) was submitted on 27 August 1997 to the General Assembly. General Assembly resolutions 52/38 G and 53/77 M are also relevant.

II. Scope

7. The guidelines that follow, having regard, *inter alia*, to General Assembly resolution 51/45 N of 10 December 1996, are primarily applicable for the consolidation of peace in post-conflict situations.

III. Principles

8. – In formulating and implementing practical disarmament measures for the consolidation of peace in regions that have suffered from conflicts, States should fully respect the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, including those contained in paragraph 14 of the guidelines for international arms transfers in the context of General Assembly resolution 46/36 H of 6 December 1991,[a] adopted in 1996;

– The guidelines that follow should be applied on a voluntary basis and with the consent of the States concerned;

– Peace agreements freely arrived at should be respected and adhered to by all concerned, thereby providing the best guarantee for the consolidation of peace in post-conflict situations;

– In the implementation of the guidelines, the root causes of conflict and the specific conditions and characteristics of the region concerned, such as political, commercial, socio-economic, ethnic, cultural and ideological factors, should be taken into account;

– States within a region, as well as those outside, with a special influence on parties to a conflict, have a particular responsibility to promote arms control and

disarmament measures with a view to the consolidation of peace in the region concerned;

- The guidelines that follow should not be used as a means to interfere in the internal affairs of other States;
- The principles contained in the following documents are also applicable:
  - Guidelines for international arms transfers in the context of General Assembly resolution 46/36 H of 6 December 1991,[a] adopted in 1996;
  - Guidelines and recommendations for regional approaches to disarmament within the context of global security,[b] adopted in 1993;
  - Guidelines for the study on conventional disarmament, adopted in 1982.

IV. Practical disarmament measures in post-conflict situations

A. Collection, control, disposal and destruction of arms, especially small arms and light weapons, and conversion of military facilities

9. In accordance with the agreement reached, an early and accurate baseline inventory and periodic reassessment of the arms in the possession of the combatants is a prerequisite to an efficient arms collection, control, disposal and/or destruction process. Thus, following the collection, control, secure storage and/or destruction of arms, it is necessary to determine which arms are surplus to the legitimate defence requirements of the State, as defined by itself.

10. There should be a secure collection and storage of such arms from the demobilized combatants or those in civilian hands, with the possible use of incentive programmes, provided that these do not themselves create a market for arms, such as "turn-in", "buy-back", "swap" or weapons-for-development programmes, or through other appropriate measures.

11. Where an agreement provides for the destruction of arms, the rapid, reliable and transparent destruction of surplus arms is an indispensable step to rendering an agreement concrete. Experience has shown that a public display of the destruction of such weapons can help to dramatize the enactment of peace and to consolidate it.

12. Where appropriate, the conversion of military facilities for civilian use should be encouraged.

13. As part of an effective post-conflict arms control programme, (i) compliance with arms embargoes declared by the United Nations Security Council and (ii) execution of voluntary regional import/export moratoriums should be implemented through, *inter alia:*

(a) Cooperation between neighbouring security, police and customs organizations, including the assistance of national contact centres of the International Criminal Police Organization;

(b) Combined border-guard operations;

(c) International and coordinated United Nations support for adherence to agreed measures;

(d) Regional or international agreements to combat illicit arms trafficking.

B. Demining and other mine actions

14. The cessation of mine laying should be an integral part of ceasefire and peace agreements, wherever applicable.

15. In areas where anti-personnel landmines have been laid during a conflict and there is agreement to destroy these mines, post-conflict activities must give priority to an integrated mine action programme which includes mine clearance and destruction, victim assistance and the reintegration of mine victims into civil society.

16. The collection of mines and other explosive ordnance should be discouraged and their destruction ensured *in situ*.

17. Information should be provided on mines laid during the conflict. Such measures as the delineation of mined areas and posting of warning signs should be taken to prevent further victimization of civilians.

18. States involved in the deployment of mines can play an important role in assisting mine clearance in mine-affected countries through the provision of necessary maps and information and appropriate technical and material assistance to remove or otherwise render ineffective existing minefields, mines and booby traps.

19. A mine awareness education plan and procedures for reporting unexploded ordnance and artifacts should be set out and geared towards both demobilized soldiers and civilians.

C. Demobilization

20. An early and accurate assessment of the combatants to be separated, assembled and demobilized is a prerequisite to an effective demobilization programme.

21. Demobilization agreements may be implemented via a demobilization centre or cantonment, established for a limited period of time, taking into account necessary medical, logistical (food, housing, etc.) and administrative support and facilities or programmes. They should be clearly separated from humanitarian centres established, for example, for returning refugees.

22. The period between the signature of an agreement and the establishment of the cantonment could, with the consent of the State concerned, be used profitably by neutral parties of observation and control of a ceasefire.

23. Registration and disarmament of combatants should occur simultaneously, whenever possible.

D. Integration of former combatants

24. The peace agreement should provide for advance planning for integration, at least for the short to medium term, to be undertaken well before the demobilization process starts. The integration programme could then be implemented in step with demobilization.

25. Consideration should be given to:

- The establishment, training and operations of combined integrated security forces on a voluntary basis, as appropriate;
- Programmes for the training, education and guidance for the integration into civil society of former combatants and their dependants, including the offer of guarantees for their personal safety;
- The return and resettlement of refugees and displaced persons to their homes as an integral part of the integration process;
- The promotion of sustainable employment and skills training, for example in the areas of rehabilitation and reconstruction programmes.

26. States are encouraged to reflect in their economic programmes the integration of combatants and secure domestic resources for such activities, supplemented, as appropriate, by external support in order to provide, *inter alia*, for effective follow-up action. The needs of different target groups, among the reintegrated combatants, including vulnerable groups such as women and children, should be identified and options designed for their integration to suit local conditions.

V. Confidence-building in post-conflict situations

27. In order to ensure the reliable implementation of the provisions of the agreement reached in a post-conflict consolidation of peace, including secure disposal and/or destruction of weapons, consideration should be given, on the basis of mutual agreement, to the following:

(a) Combined/integrated monitoring, observation and control;

(b) Transparency and verification, where appropriate, by a facilitator, or international supervision with the consent of the State concerned;

(c) A commission to mediate differences over interpretation of the terms of the agreement.

28. Implementation of agreed measures can be enhanced by the use of economic, social and other incentives, including:

(a) Humanitarian, medical and logistical aid programmes for former combatants (including families) to encourage and sustain the handover of arms;

(b) Measures to ensure the safety of former combatants;

(c) Amnesties granted by the State;

(d) Reintegration into civilian and professional life, including job training.

29. The re-establishment of public security is an essential first step. The following measures to help build confidence in an unbiased, non-discriminatory security force could be considered:

(a) The creation and training of military services and security and police forces, at a size appropriate to a post-conflict situation, taking into account the legitimate self-defence and security interests of the State;

(b) Adequate technical equipment, for example for border monitoring, and training to enable operations to be conducted efficiently and in conformity with national legislation and established norms of international law;

(c) The inclusion and integration of adequately trained former combatants on a voluntary basis.

30. To assist the reconciliation process and to create confidence in the implementation of the peace agreement, it is recommended that:

(a) An effective, objective public information campaign be promoted to sensitize the public to the peace process;

(b) National dialogue be encouraged and intensified through reconciliation programmes in the consolidation of peace;

(c) Measures aimed at enhancing public involvement through education and awareness programmes conducive to the promotion of peace be encouraged;

(d) Measures to strengthen coordination among Governments, international organizations and non-governmental organizations be implemented for the smooth transition from emergency humanitarian assistance and post-conflict assistance to long-term development.

VI. Regional and international financial and technical assistance

31. Regional and international financial, technical and technological assistance in rebuilding infrastructure and administrative capacity and civil society, and in economic rehabilitation for the implementation of practical disarmament measures, should include the early involvement of international financial institutions.

32. Regional and international financial and technical assistance should also include:

(a) Assistance for national and local measures for the collection, control, disposal and/or destruction of arms, demobilization and reintegration of former combatants, as well as for measures for the conversion of military facilities for civilian use in post-conflict situations. Such assistance can help ensure their early success;

(b) Assistance for mine clearance, victim assistance and mine awareness programmes in mine-affected countries, including assistance to mine-infested countries to remove or otherwise render ineffective existing minefields, mines and booby traps; the provision, as appropriate, of technological assistance to mine-infested countries; new technologies for mine detection and removal; and the promotion of scientific research and development on humanitarian mine-clearance techniques and technology so that mine-clearance activities can be carried out more effectively at lower cost and through safer means. International cooperation should be promoted in this regard;

(c) Assistance for reintegration measures aimed at education and training and for the creation of employment opportunities or alternative employment opportunities for discharged combatants;

(d) Assistance for public education and awareness programmes which will contribute to the promotion of peace and build resistance to the unlawful uses of small arms.

33. States that are in a position to do so should lend their support to the Secretary-General in responding to requests by Member States to collect and destroy small arms and light weapons in post-conflict situations as well as to promote new practical disarmament measures to consolidate peace, especially as undertaken and designed by affected States themselves.

VII. Other conventional arms control/limitation and disarmament measures

A. National measures

34. States should observe the highest standards of responsibility in the transfer of arms, including small arms and light weapons, as well as ammunition and explosives. Both supplier and recipient States should ensure that the quantity and level of sophistication of their arms are commensurate with their legitimate defence and security requirements, and that they do not contribute to instability and conflict in their regions or in other countries and regions or to illicit trafficking in arms.

35. States should have in place appropriate legislation and effective administrative regulations on arms export, import, transit, re-export and diversion, and should make the necessary arrangements to ensure their enforcement.

36. States should work towards the introduction of appropriate national legislation, administrative regulations and licensing requirements that define conditions under which firearms can be acquired, used and traded by private persons. In particular, they should consider the prohibition of unrestricted trade and private ownership of small arms and light weapons specifically designed for military purposes, such as automatic guns (e.g., assault rifles and machine-guns).

37. States considering measures to ensure that arms are exported only to Governments of sovereign States, either directly or through duly licensed or authorized agencies acting on their behalf, are encouraged to draw upon already existing provisions in this field.

38. States should ensure that arms production, trade and holdings (State-owned and private) are under strict and

effective control through appropriate licensing, supervision and inspection. They should also consider the establishment and maintenance of:

- National inventories of legally held weapons, specifically designed for military purposes, including up-to-date information on legally licensed dealers and manufacturers;
- A record of imports, exports and other transactions.

39. States should ensure that manufacturers apply appropriate and reliable markings on weapons, particularly small arms and light weapons, as an integral part of the production process, so as to assist national law enforcement agencies in tracing the country of origin and the manufacturer of the weapons in combating illicit arms trafficking.

40. States should undertake to secure their holdings of weapons, including small arms and light weapons, against losses resulting from corruption, theft and withholding through appropriate organizational, technical and personnel measures.

41. States should ensure the effectiveness and professional conduct of security forces and authorities (customs, border control, police, criminal prosecution) involved in the implementation of weapons control measures, through the appropriate selection of personnel, training and technical equipment.

B. Regional/international cooperation and transparency

42. States should explore the scope for closer coordination and, on a voluntary basis, the possible harmonization of their national regulations on arms export/import/transit, including relevant customs procedures.

43. States and their national authorities involved in weapons control measures should reinforce their collective efforts to prevent and combat illicit trafficking of arms, particularly small arms, through:

(a) Exchange of information on illegal activities (sources, routes, caches);

(b) Combined police, border-guard, intelligence and customs operations, as required;

(c) Technical and training assistance;

(d) Establishment of national points of contact;

(e) Improved judicial cooperation, including to combat the violation of national gun laws and regulations.

44. States are encouraged to consider developing and strengthening appropriate transparency measures at the multilateral, regional, subregional and national levels. Taking into account the particular regional situation and legitimate self-defence and security needs, these might include, based on the agreed initiative of all the States within the concerned regions or subregions and with participation on a voluntary basis, possible regional or subregional arrangements, confidence-building and arms-control measures. International arms transfers should not be used as a means to interfere in the internal affairs of other States.

45. States should consider, on a voluntary basis, the exchange of information on their national policies, legislation and administrative control over armaments, with particular emphasis on small arms and light weapons.

46. States should consider all appropriate measures with a view to promoting restraint and responsibility in conventional arms transfers. States which have established voluntary regional and subregional measures for conventional arms transfers should make available all relevant information on these to any interested State or group of States.

VIII. Role of the United Nations

47. The Secretary-General, in recognition of the important contribution of programmes for voluntary weapons collection and/or destruction, could be invited to consider, on a case-by-case basis, means to facilitate the successful conduct of such programmes.

48. The United Nations should coordinate and facilitate the exchange of information between States. At the request of the States concerned, the United Nations could provide coordination and assistance, including in seeking regional and international financial and technical support, for the development of programmes to promote and implement disarmament and arms control/limitation measures in the context of the consolidation of peace.

49. The coordination role of the United Nations should be fulfilled in the fields of mine awareness, training, surveying, mine detection and clearance, scientific research on mine detection and clearance technology, and information on and distribution of medical equipment and supplies.

50. The United Nations has a central role in the field of disarmament. This role is enhanced with the designation of the Department for Disarmament Affairs as the focal point to coordinate all action on small arms within the United Nations system.

51. Cooperation and coordination should be increased between the relevant intergovernmental bodies of the United Nations and within the United Nations Secretariat; the Centre for International Crime Prevention with regard to its work related to illicit manufacturing and trafficking in firearms, their parts and components and ammunition; the Department for Disarmament Affairs; and the mechanism for Coordinating Action on Small Arms in ongoing initiatives related to illicit trafficking in small arms.

52. The United Nations should continue to play a leading role in addressing the issue of small arms.

Notes

[a] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-first Session, Supplement No. 42* (A/51/42), annex I.

[b] Ibid., *Forty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 42* (A/48/42), annex II.

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